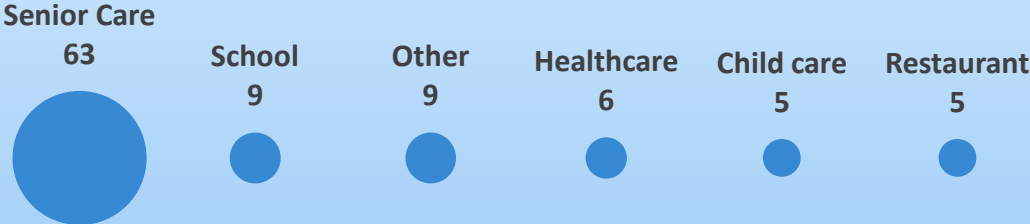
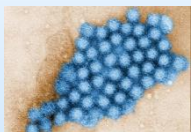


# Norovirus in Montana: Tiny Amounts of Virus Causing Enormous Damage to Vulnerable Populations.

Norovirus is not a reportable disease condition; however, outbreaks of gastroenteritis are reportable in Montana. On average, 21 confirmed outbreaks were caused by norovirus and another 12 that were likely caused by norovirus are reported in Montana each year.



Outbreaks are most common in senior care settings, such as nursing homes and assisted living facilities.



In 68% of outbreaks, norovirus was transmitted via person to person.

For 20% of outbreaks, the transmission route remained unknown. ?



Foodborne transmission was documented in 7% of norovirus outbreaks.

Outbreaks are most commonly reported in the cooler months, between December and May. In the last three years, April and January have been the busiest months for outbreaks likely caused by norovirus, but the season begins in fall.



Number of confirmed or suspected norovirus outbreaks reported in Montana in 2013-2015.

Norovirus is the most common cause of acute gastroenteritis outbreaks in Montana and the nation. It is also the leading cause of death from enteric pathogens in Montana. An extremely low infectious dose allows for easy transmission and norovirus can survive on surfaces for a long time. This is why good handwashing skills are important to reduce the spread of this highly infectious viral disease, as well as environmental cleaning with bleach. Norovirus often spreads in congregate living settings and is particularly dangerous for vulnerable populations.

